

Today is \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ the \_\_\_\_\_. This is Ken Morgan's Northcoast Ag Report, our lead story is about \_\_\_\_\_ when we return

## **H-2A CERTIFICATIONS RISE, SIGNALING INCREASE IN FARM LABOR DEMAND**

### **Audio with AFBF economist Veronica Nigh**

Data from the Department of Labor shows an increased demand for foreign farm workers. In the first quarter of 2018 the Department of Labor certified 15 percent more positions than they did in the first quarter of 2017. Overall, the demand for farm labor through the foreign worker H-2A program is up over 100 percent compared to five years ago. AFBF economist Veronica Nigh says the data supports comments from farmers that say they are having trouble finding workers...tape

Cut #1 :14 OC:... "on the ground."

Farmers must advertise available jobs to the domestic workforce before turning to the H-2A program, and have increased wages to find more labor, yet the issue remains...tape

Cut #2 :15 OC:... "H-2A program."

Finding a solution to the farm labor issue is a priority for AFBF...tape

Cut #3 :25 OC:... "as an industry."

## **Net Farm Income Forecast Shows 2018 Decline**

**The Department of Agriculture predicts net farm income will decline 8.3 percent in 2018, dropping \$5.4 billion to \$59.5 billion. Meanwhile, USDA's Economic Research Service suggests that net cash farm income is forecast to decline \$6.7 billion, or 6.8 percent, to an inflation-adjusted figure of \$91.9 billion. USDA says the forecast declines are the result of changes in cash receipts and production expenses. If realized, 2018 net farm income would be the lowest since 2002 and net cash farm income would be at its lowest level**

**since 2009. Both profitability measures remain below their 2000-2016 averages, which included substantial increases in crop and animal/, and animal product cash receipts from 2010 to 2013. Net cash farm income includes cash receipts from farming as well as farm-related income, including government payments, minus cash expenses. Net farm income is a more comprehensive measure of profits that incorporates noncash items, including changes in inventories, economic depreciation and gross imputed rental income.**